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The Voice of the Connecticut Forest Products Industry

February 21, 2012

Comments on:

S.B. 84: AN ACT CONCERNING OUTDOOR WOOD BURNING FURNACES

Submitted by: Joan Nichols – President CT Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy and members of the Environment Committee:

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association is concerned over any legislation that would restrict the use of alternative fuel sources when properly utilized.

Many of our members own and operate outdoor wood burning furnaces (OWFs). These units have operated complaint free since their installation. Wood is a renewable resource, readily available from Connecticut forest lands.

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association supports legislation that would recognize standards based on advanced technologies in outdoor wood burning furnaces and an increase in fines for owners of outdoor wood burning furnaces who do not operate them properly and/or burn material other than clean, untreated wood. Any changes in legislation should address the repeat offenders and units that have repeated complaints and not a blanket ban for the majority of units that operate complaint free.

A cord of wood sold for \$225 per cord would cost the Connecticut consumer \$538 in oil and over \$1,000 in electricity. Natural gas is not an option for the majority of our members who live in rural communities. The savings are even more significant for OWF owners who cut their own wood, which many do.

We strongly support the continued use of outdoor wood burning furnaces fueled by a locally grown renewable resource that supports Connecticut jobs and helps Connecticut citizens in these difficult economic times.

According to a 2010 UCONN study, sales of Connecticut forest products contributed \$131.5 million dollars in 2007 to the states economy.